

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
FOURTH SERIES

VOL. XIII, No. 16, pp. 247-248.

NOVEMBER 6, 1924

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XVI

ON LATICAUDA SCHISTORHYNCHUS AND  
LATICAUDA SEMIFASCIATA

BY

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Through the kindness of Dr. Stanley C. Ball, Curator of Collections, of the Bernice P. Bishop Museum of Honolulu, I recently have had an opportunity to examine four very interesting sea-snakes collected by Mr. C. F. Maxwell at Niue or Savage Island. These are numbers 291, 292, 293 and 294 of the Bishop Museum collection.\* The island where these snakes were secured is the type locality of *Laticauda schistorhynchus* (Günther), and this little series of four specimens is of interest because it shows that this species is distinct from *Laticauda semifasciata* (Reinwardt) of the East Indies and Loo Choo Islands.

I have before me twelve specimens of the latter species, from Okinawa (No. 22093), Miyako (14997, 22094, 22095) and Ishigaki Shima (22096, 22101, 22103, 22104). In these the gastrosteges vary from 200 to 206 and the cross-bands from 30 to 39 on the body and five to seven on the tail. The black rings involve from two to three gastrosteges and three to five mid-dorsal scales.

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\*One of these has very kindly been presented to the California Academy of Sciences by the authorities of the Bishop Museum.

November 6, 1924

The Niue Island specimens of *L. schistorhynchus* have scale rows 21, 23, 21, 23; gastrosteges 193, 192, 190, 194; urosteges 38, 35, 41, 40; supralabials 7-7, 7-8, 7-7, 7-7; temporals 2+3 in all; rostral touching 5, 4, 5, 5 shields, and divided in the first and last specimens; light rings on body 23, 24, 25, 23, on tail, 3, 4, 5, 4; black rings involving from three to six gastrosteges and six or seven mid-dorsal scales.

If we include the counts given by Boulenger and Stejneger, we find that the average number of gastrosteges in nine specimens of *L. schistorhynchus* is 188, while in twenty-one *L. semifasciata* it is 203. The difference in color seems to be quite constant.